

## ORGANIZATION WILL MARKET INVENTIONS

The University of Sherbrooke Faculty of Medicine, the private sector and Sherbrooke University Hospital (Centre hospitalier universitaire de Sherbrooke, or CHUS) have created an organization specifically to promote research and development of medical and surgical equipment, and to market equipment invented by its own staff or researchers from around the world. R/D CHUS Inc. will offer inventors a chance to have their prototypes validated in a controlled hospital environment, according to inventor Fernand Jalbert, who is general manager of R/D CHUS.

The invention that inspired creation of the organization is the Laparette, a laparoscopy instrument that incorporates capabilities for cauterization, tissue irrigation and suction of residual liquids. The design of its disposable bidirectional valve will enable the Laparette to cut current costs by half, the organization says. R/D CHUS anticipates that marketing the Laparette in Canada will create about 40 jobs. Other inventions are already at the prototype or patent-registration stage.

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### CRÉATION DE R/D CHUS INC.

La Faculté de médecine de l'Université de Sherbrooke, le Centre hospitalier universitaire de Sherbrooke (CHUS) et le secteur privé ont uni leurs efforts pour créer R/D

CHUS inc., entreprise qui offre aux chercheuses et aux chercheurs du monde entier un milieu favorable à la recherche et au développement d'appareils médicaux et chirurgicaux, et assure le lancement sur le marché des appareils inventés par son personnel ou par des tiers. «Nous offrons aux inventeurs de faire valider leur prototype en milieu hospitalier contrôlé», explique Fernand Jalbert, directeur général de R/D CHUS et lui-même inventeur.

Une invention est d'ailleurs à l'origine de la création de l'entreprise : il s'agit de Laparette, un instrument de laparoscopie novateur qui intègre les fonctions de cautérisation, irrigation des tissus et succion des liquides résiduels. Grâce à une valve bidirectionnelle jetable de conception révolutionnaire, la Laparette permet de réduire les coûts de moitié par rapport aux appareils existants. R/D CHUS prévoit que la commercialisation de Laparette au Canada permettra de créer une quarantaine d'emplois. D'autres inventions en sont déjà à l'étape du prototype ou du dépôt de brevet.

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### STAY IN CANADA, MINISTER ASKS MDs

Alberta Health Minister Shirley McClellan has written letters urging 4500 Alberta physicians to stay in Canada. The letter is an apparent attempt to stem the flow of physicians to the United States. According to a *Canadian Press* report, the minister hopes doctors will continue to be

part of a "contemporary, affordable and forward-looking" health care system and resist blandishments from south of the border.

The report says that in her response to arguments that doctors have been shut out of the debate over cutting \$750 million from Alberta's health care budget, McClellan told physicians they have had plenty of opportunity to offer opinions on changes to health care. However, Dr. Fred Moriarty, president of the Alberta Medical Association, responds that hundreds of physicians are looking south because they feel undervalued and unappreciated in Canada.

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### FORUM SUPPORTS PRINCIPLES OF CHA

Members of the National Forum on Health confirmed their support for the principles of the Canada Health Act (CHA) and public funding of medicare during a March meeting. A news release said members are convinced that Canadians want a publicly administered, comprehensive system that is universally accessible.

However, the members also expressed confidence that medicare can be maintained with a level of funding that is lower than the current proportion of the gross domestic product spent on health care. "The public system can be maintained through greater efficiency in delivering care, from reducing duplication and by ensuring that money is spent only on services that produce good results and improved health. The

question is how to promote better management, accountability and control — and better outcomes."

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### **FAMILY DOCTORS PROVIDE GOOD VALUE: MMA**

Family doctors provide the best insurance against rising health care costs, posters produced by the Manitoba Medical Association (MMA) state. The association recently distributed two posters that focus on a physician's qualifications and advocate primary medical care as expert, efficient, cost-effective, comprehensive and coordinated.

The posters note that major changes are inevitable if health care costs are to be lowered, but one thing must not change: access to the family doctor for primary and preventive care. The MMA campaign will emphasize the special training and knowledge that distinguish family doctors from nonphysician health care providers, says the MMA newsletter *Inter-Com*.

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### **RURAL INITIATIVES PRAISED BY NLMA**

The Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association (NLMA) has praised the provincial government for accepting several initiatives concerning salaried physicians that are aimed at improving recruitment and retention in rural areas. Dr. Ed Hunt, the president, said in a news release that the approved initiatives are elimination of the differential for provisionally registered physicians, extra compensation for large workloads, recognition of service in isolated areas and recognition for previous service. The initiatives are to be phased in over the next 3 years.

Salaried physicians represent about 40% of NLMA membership,

and many of the doctors work in rural or isolated areas. They have heavy workloads, often work 60-hour weeks and are on call every third night or more, said Hunt. "These initiatives will compensate them for the extra work they have been doing and help recruit physicians to vacant positions, thus benefiting the community as well."

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### **100 YEARS OF X-RAYS COMMEMORATED**

Montreal's McCord Museum of Canadian History will present *The Inside Story: 100 years of x-rays* until Nov. 12. The exhibition celebrates the 100th anniversary of the discovery of x-rays by German physicist Wilhelm Conrad Röntgen. Featured are interactive and audiovisual presentations, equipment displays, animation activities and the results of radiographic examination of a 3000-year-old mummy. The exhibit was first proposed by Dr. Denis Melançon, a radiologist at the Montreal Neurological Hospital and associate professor at McGill University.

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### **COMPENDIUM LOOKS AT GENDER ISSUES**

A list of articles that points out differences in medical research or in the kinds of health treatment received by men and women has been compiled in an annotated bibliography published by the National Reference Center for Bioethics Literature in Washington, DC. The 14-page "Scope Note", *Gender Issues in Health Care*, offers a compendium of government action, association statements, books and articles from around the world that document the ways in which medical and bioethical journals have reported gender-related issues. Copies cost \$5 (US) and are available

from the National Reference Center for Bioethics Literature, Kennedy Institute of Ethics, Georgetown University, Washington, DC 20057-1065. Orders must be prepaid.

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### **RESEARCH FUNDING TOPS \$25 MILLION**

In the first year of a health-research partnership program, the Medical Research Council (MRC) and the Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association of Canada (PMAC) injected \$25.7 million into medical research and training programs in Canada. The funding supported 66 different research projects, including a number of training awards. The initial 5-year agreement of the MRC/PMAC Health Program is expected to provide mutual benefits for Canada's research community and its industrial partners.

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### **NS UNDERTAKES HEALTH SURVEY**

About 4000 people are expected to volunteer to participate in a Nova Scotia Health Survey over the next few months. Participants will complete a questionnaire, then attend a clinic where a variety of measurements and blood samples will be taken. The survey will provide comprehensive information on participants' current health status, with a focus on cardiovascular disease, other chronic diseases and preventive health practices.

The 1995 survey is under the direction of Dr. David MacLean, principal investigator of Heart Health Nova Scotia. A similar 1986 survey was later replicated in all provinces, and was the prototype for the Canadian Heart Health Data Base, the world's largest population-based database dealing with cardiovascular risk factors.